

Dated March 22^d 1826

An
Essay
on
Phlegmata Dolens,
for the
Degree
of
Doctor of Medicine;
by
Isaac P. Trindle
of
Pennsylvania.
1825.

See her death spot

and D. Sampson

An
Essay on
Phlegmatio Dolens.

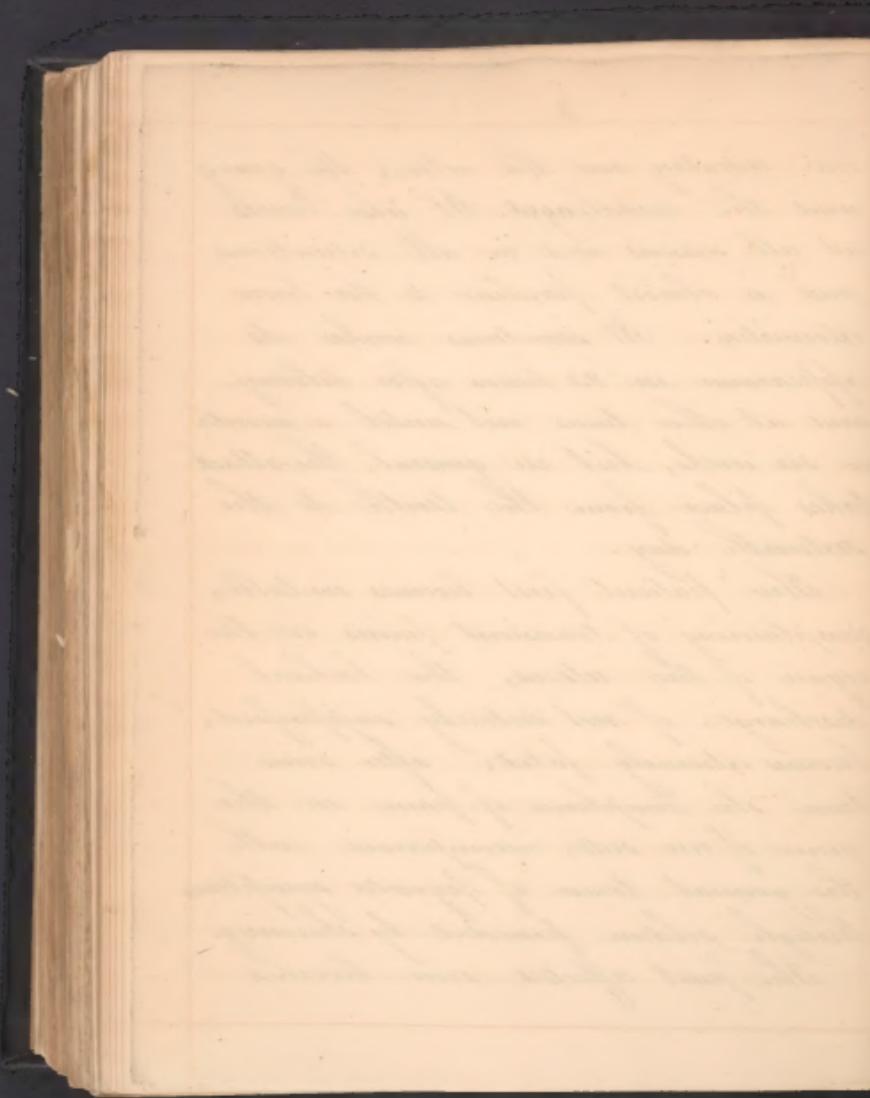
The tumult-logy of lying-in women has been described by different authors under a variety of names; as, phlegmatio dolens, phlegmatio lactea, ecchymoma lymphatica, anasarca sensa, onitis and by Dr. Good, bucermia sparganosis; or sparganosis puerarum. These have been the result of the different theories which have been invented to explain the nature of the affection, few of which convey to us any exact meaning, and some are obviously erroneous: Upon the whole, the last, or sparganosis puerarum is, perhaps, the most appropriate.

This disease attacks women of all ranks and habits; the healthy and the valetudinary; the lean and the corpulent;

and the following

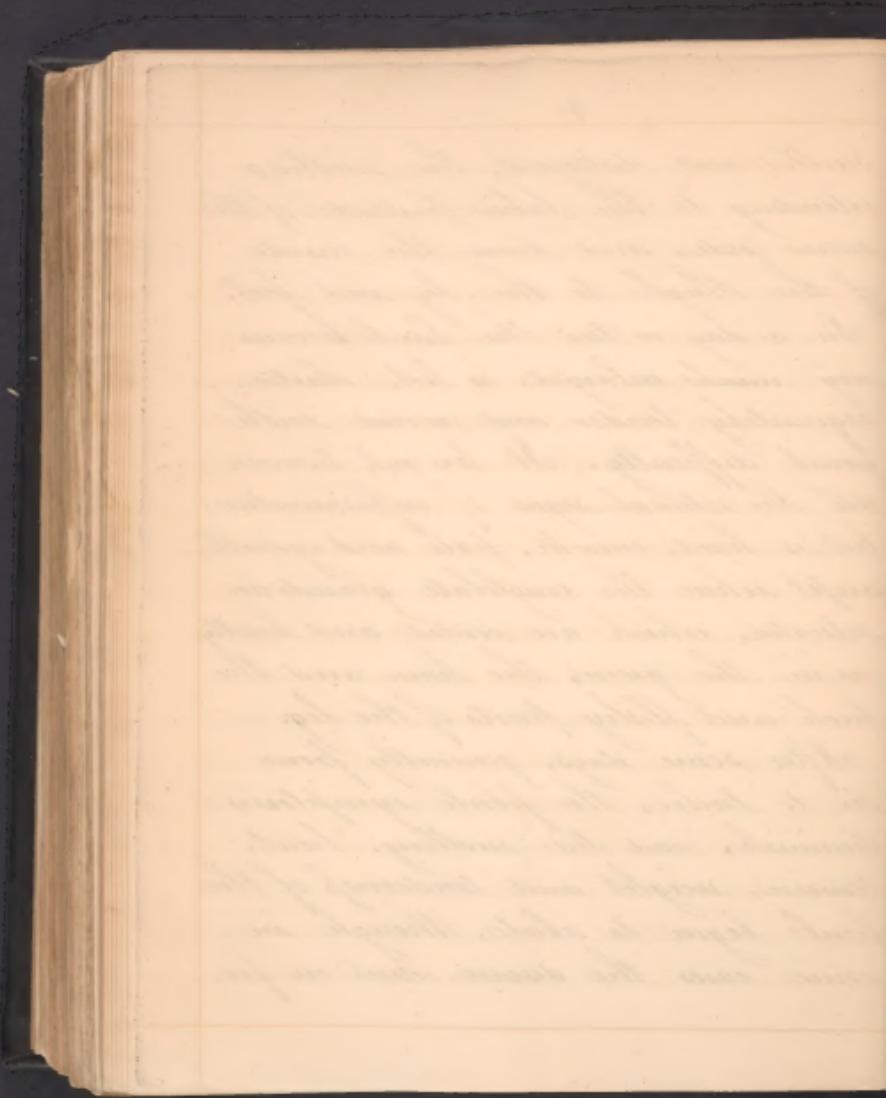
the sedentary and the active; the young and the middleaged. It also occurs at all seasons and in all situations; and is almost peculiar to the lower extremities. It sometimes makes its appearance in 24 hours after delivery, and at other times not until a month or six weeks, but in general, the attack takes place from the tenth to the sixteenth day.

The patient first becomes irritable, complaining of transient pains in the region of the uterus, the lochial discharge, if not entirely suppressed, becomes extremely fetid; after some time she complains of pain in the groin of one side, accompanied with the general train of pyretic symptoms, though seldom preceded by shivering. The part affected soon becomes



swollen and distended, the swelling extending to the labia pudendi of the same side, and down the inside of the thigh to the leg and foot. In a day or two the limb becomes very much enlarged, is hot, elastic, exquisitely tender and moved with great difficulty. It has not, however, all the external signs of inflammation, but is hard, smooth, pale and equable, except where the conglobate glands are situated, which are corded and knotty, as in the groin, the hand and the back and fleshy parts of the leg.

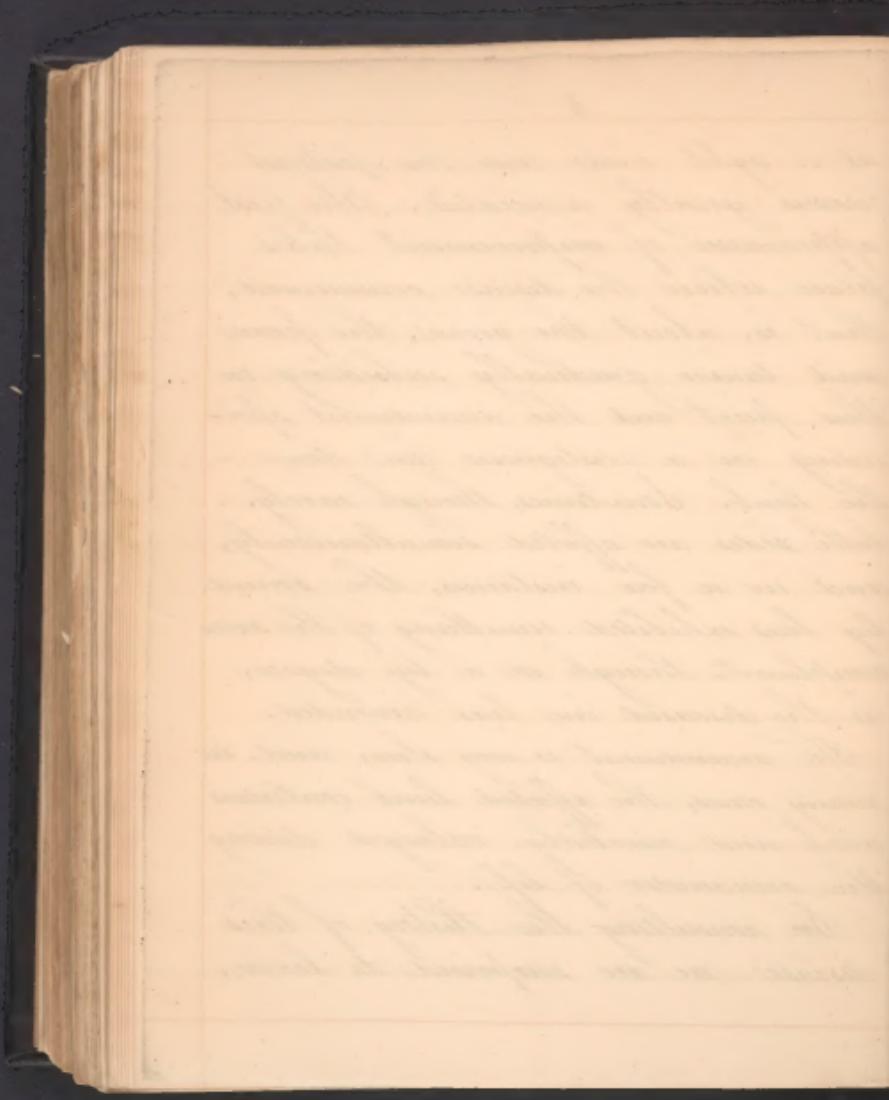
After some days, generally from six to twelve, the fibrile symptoms diminish, and the swelling, heat, tension, weight and tenderness of the limb begin to abate, though in some cases the disease runs on for



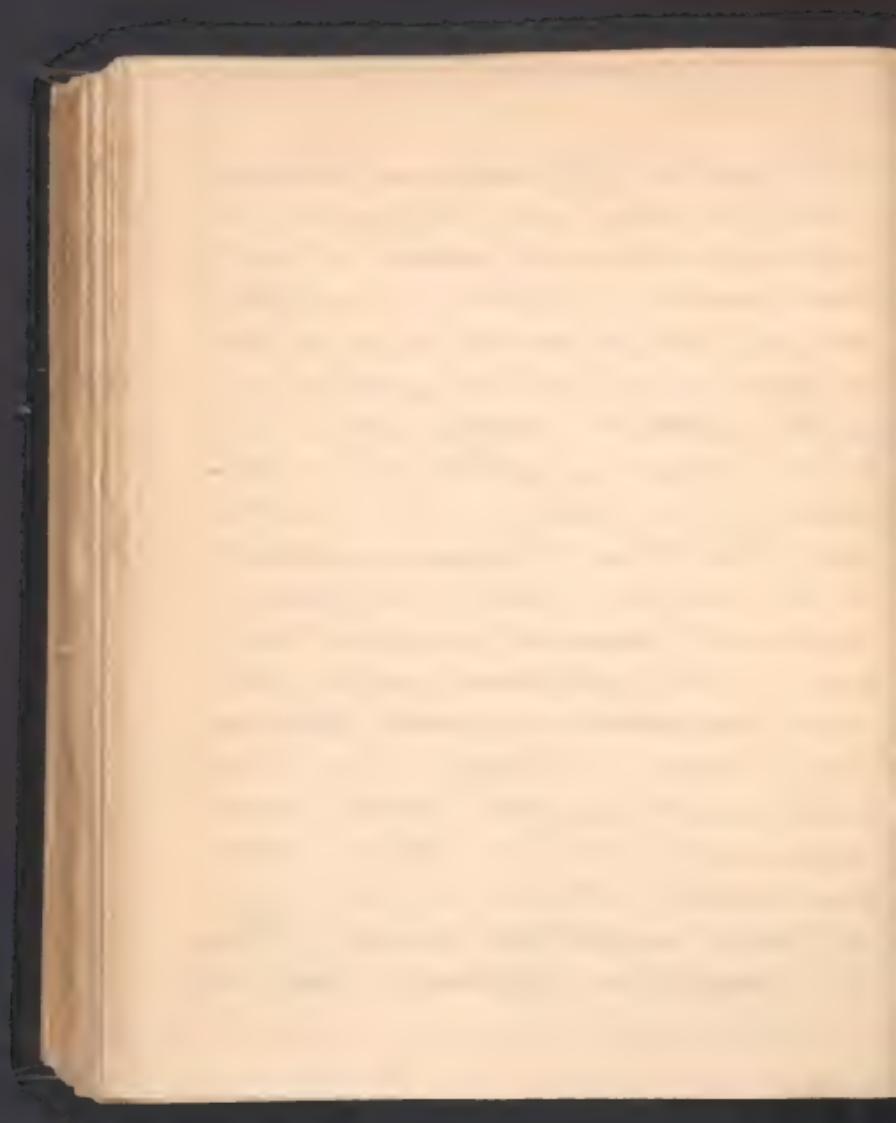
six or eight weeks and the patient becomes greatly emaciated. The first appearance of improvement takes place where the disease commenced, that is, about the groin, the pain and tumor gradually subsiding in this part and the amendment spreading in a contiguous line down the limb. Sometimes, though rarely, both sides are affected simultaneously, and in a few instances, the sound leg has exhibited something of the same complaint, though in a less degree, as the diseased one has amended.

The amendment is very slow, and, in many cases, the affected limb continues weak and morbidly enlarged during the remainder of life.

In consulting the history of this disease we are surprised to learn,

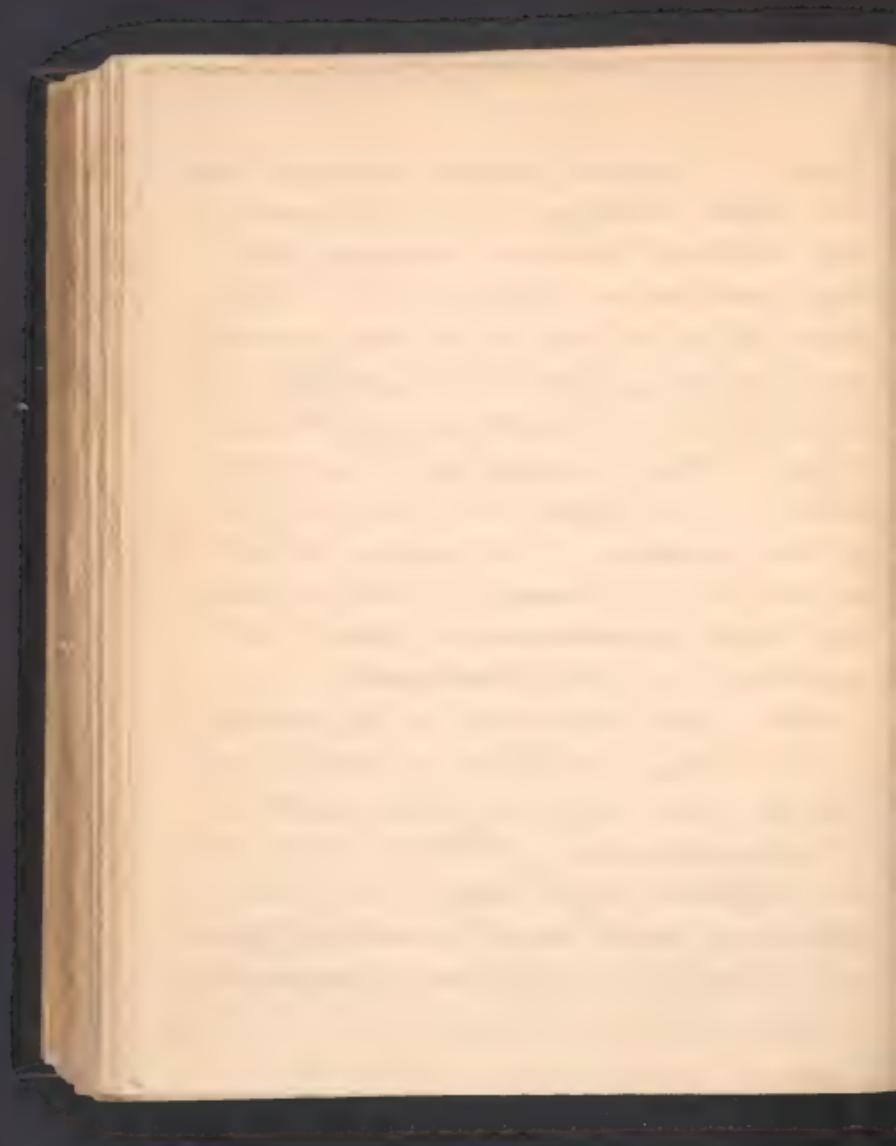


that neither Hippocrates nor his successors for many ages, have given us any circumstantial account of it, and indeed so little is said, that we are left in doubt as to its real existence until the commencement of the fifteenth century, when a short account is given in a publication by a Casto, of the swollen and livid legs of women incident to the pueral state, and also a method of treatment proposed; but even in this description many of the most important symptoms have not been recorded, although there is not much doubt but the author was acquainted with the disease under consideration. From the time of a Casto until the death of Puzos, this complaint appears to have been



came to various writers, amongst whom were Wæteman and Maurocau; the latter of these too observing the very unusual state of the lesions, and that it was frequently entirely subscroped, ascribed the swelling of the limb to a metastasis of this discharge, thus considering the suppuration as the cause and not an effect of the disease. It is obvious that under the influence of such a theory, but little advancement could be effected in the treatment.

After the appearance of the posthumous writings of Pugos in 1759 a new theory was adopted of the nature of this singular affection— it was now supposed to be owing to a natural disease of the limb and a mortid deposition taking place in consequence



This redundancy, and hence has
been called dupl. lacteum, and which is
still retained amongst the French
although few, if any, consider this
process of its formation as correct.

The next writers who published
accounts of uterine diseases were Wertheim,
Werner, De Bruyn and Groll. The
origin of the Mole is however in this
not instead of consulting a detail
of milk, he supposed it to be owing
to an extravasation from the quadruplica
vaginae resulting by the injection of
the fluids secreted against the form
of the uterus during a severe labour
process, and the extravasated fluid
not being duly absorbed. Were this
correct, we should have the extravasation
occurring at a more regular period
after delivery, and as the immediate



an inflammati^o of sustaining considerable notice,
it would never succeed an easy labour.
Mr. Syge refers it to obstruction of the
lymphatic glands, and Dr. Forster to
inflammation of the side affected generally.
The next writer on the subject was
Dr. Hull of Manchester. This author
rejects all the preceding doctrines of the
disease as being inadequate to explain
its nature, and presents us with a
capacious theory, the result of his own
investigation and experience. He
maintains that the proximate cause
consists in an inflammatory affection,
producing suddenly a considerable
effusion of serum and coagulable
lymph from the exhalants into the
cellular membrane of the limb. This
is perhaps the most plausible man-
ner of accounting for the nature of



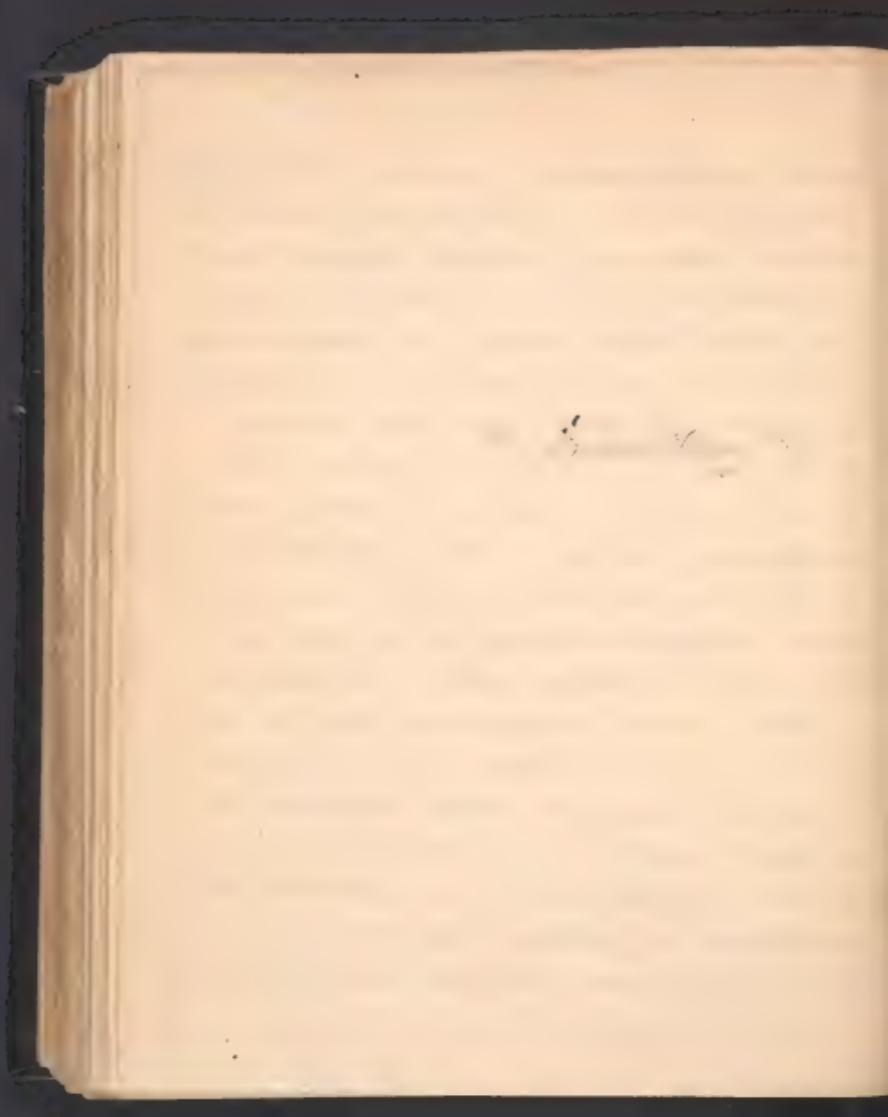
this strange disease yet offered to the medical world; yet, upon a critical examination, now this will be found insufficient to account for many of its phenomena, and in some respects at variance with the pathological doctrines of the present day, specially as regards inflammation.

Dr. Hull supposed the inflammatory affection to exist in the muscular, cellular and cutaneous tissues at the same time, and occasionally even to involve the neighbouring blood vessels, nerves, glands and lymphatics: but such a sudden and extensive inflammation, involving organs and parts so numerous and dissimilar, is not now believed to occur here. Were it of the nature suggested by Dr. Hull we should have seen florid red colour so peculiar to



acute inflammations, in lieu of the pale
un-phlegmatic appearance of the hand
which invariably attends phlegmatic deters.

Although this is a disease of the
peripheral state, when the Uterus has
just previously undergone a great change
in its condition, and still remains
in a critical state to be acted upon
by the exciting causes of disease: and
although previous to the appearance
of the first swelling &c. the more in-
trinsic characteristics of the complaint
the patient always feels the sensation
pace either transient or fixed in the
region of the Uterus — a great and
unnatural change takes place in the
vulval discharge, frequently it is
entirely suppressed, and when it does
continue to flow, it is very small
in quantity and excretes an extremely



solid colour, evidently denoting functional derangement in the organ by which it is produced. Although so many symptoms seem to indicate it, still not one of all those who have previously written on phrenitis seems to me to do injury to the disease; but that the affection is located in the organ, I think is extremely probable, and should now be conceded if not to easy to conceive, or the rest of the phenomena. Now the sympathy exists between parts of a similarity of structure, and the ulcers may in some respects & in the nature of a strid and performing similar functions, we may reasonably suppose that a discordant state of that organ would sympathetically affect the glands in its immediate neighbourhood, and that may



would become inflamed and unable to perform their functions — the circulation of the sympathic becomes interrupted, and the sympathetics, in consequence of their altered state, yield to the undue circulation, become mortally obstructed and inflamed in consequence of their irritation; thus producing all the distressing symptoms incident to the complaint.

With these remarks concerning the nature of phlegmata let us proceed to, in the next place, of treatment which would be somewhat varied and perhaps some additional remedies be considered necessary. In the treatment the indications would be first to restore the healthy functions of the uterus, secondly, to calm the fits which occur in the general system, and thirdly, to adapt a



cause of animals seems to be a great
limit. to supply to our indolent
our animals must be sent as well
as we as food and by being shipped
at other directly to it or in its im-
mediate vicinity; and that sent as
a gift of by an impious hand
upon the general system. the
numerous causes of mild and heat in the
into the uterus, in order to remove morbid
secretions and thus bring down menses.
peculiarities of the abdomen to a
situation of a thick adhesions above
name. Then comes out upon the uterus
in the general system in blood-
vessel, purging alternative menses, and
the regulation of that so as not to
in much contraband to a few malignant
actions. so as there is nothing
inflammation in the womb and



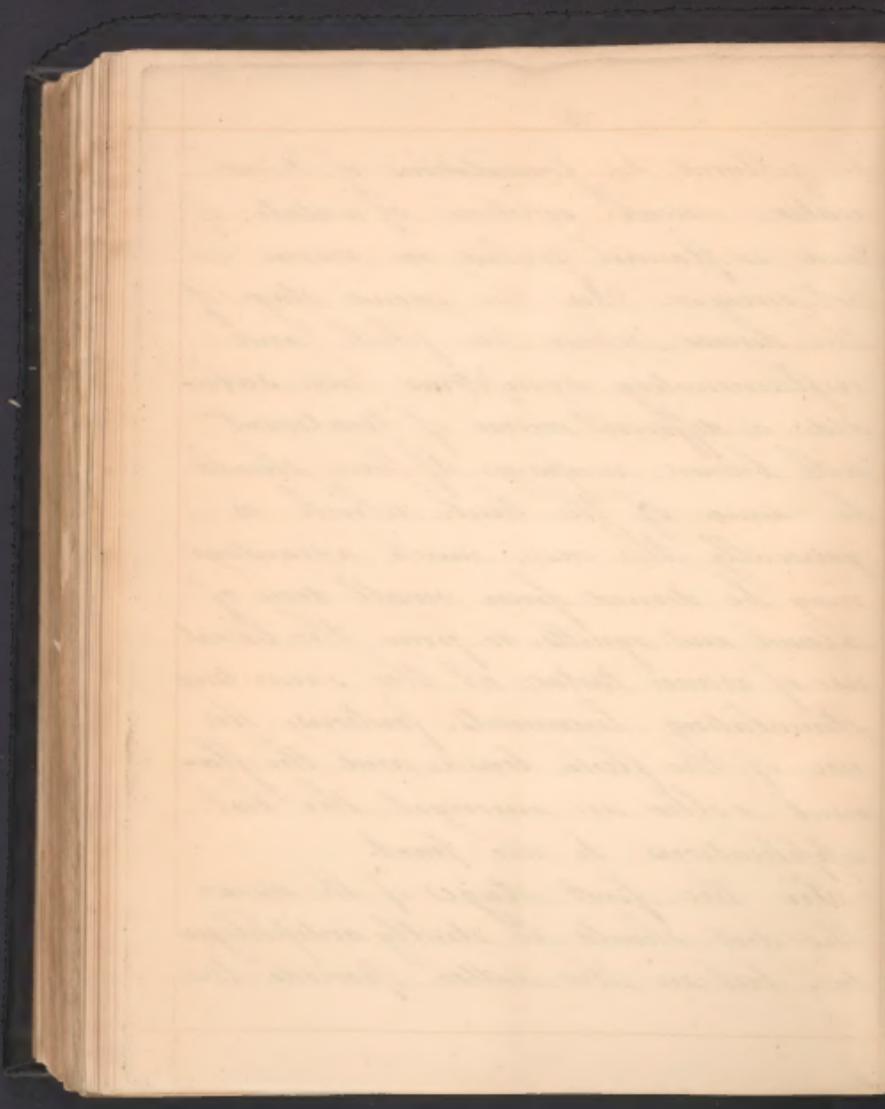
so as to sustain, notwithstanding, an unnatural excitement to a great degree. we should then then be more easily enabled to judging and measuring down of intensity & duration: are a violent nervousness has generally been attended with decided tenderness, when first, as a surge, and secondly, from its general influence over the secretory organs, impairs restoring the healthy functions of the bowels. to attain pain, which is generally very great, qualities must be given.

The local applications to the limb suffering the hurt during the inflammatory stage are first applied to the joint, which are very useful if the inflammation is violent, though generally lessens over the part will be attended with more advantage. these may



be followed by fomentations of tepid water, weak solution of acetate of lead or flannel soaked in warm or hot vinegar. In the second stage of the disease, when the febrile and inflammatory symptoms have subsided, a different course of treatment will become necessary. If there should be oedema of the limb, which is generally the case, much advantage may be derived from small doses of calonel and squills, or from the liberal use of cream or tartar, at the same time stimulating liniments, frictions, the use of the flesh brush, and the flannel roller are amongst the best applications to the part.

In the first stage of the disease the diet should be strictly antiphlogistic, but in the latter periods the



more nutritious and stimulating articles
together with the moderate use of
wine, bark &c. will be necessary.

Correct etiology

Improper division of syllables p 7

Theory - (unrealistic, improbable)